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had probably had different names before his father's time but that the division into two big groups of "mature, middle-aged" men was always characteristic of Gros Ventre organization. This same informant was likewise under the impression that a man would have to stay with whichever of the two societies he, with his company, had originally joined. Turn Toes said however that he had known a few cases of men who had originally been Stars later joining with the Wolf-men, and of one Wolf-man who afterwards joined the Stars. These known cases, however, occurred fairly late in Gros Ventre history, and probably after the formation of new companies had ceased.

Sanctions of Force

Social sanctions were seemingly the most important means of control. Public opinion was effective in all aspects of conduct. Public disapproval meant loss of prestige and in more severe cases made itself felt by "shunning." It was brought to bear upon the individual in an especially effective way through ridicule, as exercised particularly in the enemy-friendship.[21]

A considerable number of misdeeds, like theft or failure to observe the rules in ceremonial life, were believed to result automatically in supernatural punishment ("bad luck"). Fear of retaliation through witchcraft also exerted a restraining influence.[22]

There were only three situations in which sanction through physical force was applicable. These were, first, failure to obey the rules of behavior promulgated by the society in charge while any one of the Sacred Dances was in progress; second, murder; third, adultery on the part of the wife.[23]

In regard to the first, it is quite clear that in case one of the Sacred Dances had been vowed, the whole tribe had to come together and remain united until the rite was finished. "If the bands happened to be scattered at the time a Sacred Dance was to

[21] For a discussion of the enemy-friendship, see pp. 102–06.

[22] Cf. also pp. 169–70 for a discussion of social and other types of motivation proposed to children. Witchcraft is dealt with in detail in Cooper, Ms., 1949.

[23] A detailed treatment of punishment for adultery is given in pp. 183–90, and will not be discussed in this section.

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688 be held, runners were sent by the company of the vower and all were obliged to attend. If, in preparation for the Dance, the vower and the members of his company made a ruling, for example that a hunt was necessary, this would be announced. It would be stated that no one should go out alone to kill buffalo because they wanted everybody to kill some, and it was added: 'This is the order of the Wolves (or Stars). If anyone disobeys this rule, the Wolves (or Stars) will attend to them!' Should anyone have disobeyed the order, when they all returned from the hunt it would be announced: 'So-and-so disobeyed our rule.' The company of the vower would then go in a body to the delinquent's lodge, singing a special song.[24] The people would know that someone was going to be raided and all would go out to see who the culprit might have been." The delinquent knew that if he showed anger and resisted, he was in danger of being hurt or even killed. The company confiscated the culprit's meat, taking all of it that was there, and in addition would usually tear up his lodge. Should the delinquent have an enemy-friend among the "soldiers," that one took the lead in punishing and might even go so far as to cut the ears off of the delinquent's finest horse—a deep humiliation for its owner.

688 625 Thus during a Sacred Dance, from the time the vow was publicly announced until the Dance was over, the company of the vower was in complete authority and could apply sanctions of force if the various rulings were not obeyed. They actually constituted a police for the duration of the Dance. As soon as the Dance was over, however, the vower's company had no further power and the police function inherent in the soldier societies apparently remained in abeyance until some other Sacred Dance was performed.

688 625 224 There is some little question as to whether or not attendance of all bands was compulsory at the first spring hunt for buffalo and, if so, whether the Star and Wolf societies exercised their authority at this time. On one occasion in 1939, one informant, speaking in general terms, stated that the chief of the tribe had the possibility of calling on either the Stars or the Wolves to punish an offender who hunted alone after it had been announced that the buffalo had been sighted and all were to hunt together; and on another

[24] Song recorded as No. 103.

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occasion he stated that it was the "law" of the spring hunt that no one should hunt buffalo alone or in a small group, violation of which invoked the sanctions applied by the Wolf-men or Stars. However, in 1940, this same informant stated twice, explicitly, that there was no police power except at the Sacred Dances and on a third occasion in that year said: "After the Sacred Dance the company disbanded, and the chief resumed control, but he did not punish anybody for hunting buffalo alone."

In any case, authority was delegated to the companies only temporarily. Otherwise there was no agency beyond that of the family which could apply sanctions of force, and then, on only two counts. A husband had the right to take the life of an unfaithful wife; the family had the right of blood revenge in case of murder. In both, however, less extreme modes of behavior were approved and bloodshed could honorably be avoided.

When murder occurred, if the family of the murdered person could be persuaded to accept a payment of goods as restitution, further spilling of blood was prevented. It was said that the lodge of the band chief offered temporary refuge to a murderer and that sanctuary was likewise available in the lodge of the Keeper either of the Flat or of the Feathered Pipe. It was thought that if the murderer and his family, who collectively shared responsibility for the crime, could flee the scene, time would be gained for negotiating the blood-price. If one blood relative killed another, there was no retaliation, but the murderer was shunned.

While there was a considerable amount of fighting and quarreling among the Gros Ventres, especially under the influence of liquor, disputes were usually settled without bloodshed. Outright murder, as distinct from deaths attributed to witchcraft, was seemingly relatively infrequent. The following seven cases, arranged chronologically, illustrate actual behavior. Each of these was referred to independently by several different informants with a high level of agreement among them on details. The total represents all the murders that were known to have occurred in the period from about 1850 to 1885.

Case No. 1. These events took place about 1847. Two young men, who were related by blood, went on foot to steal horses from the enemy. One had obtained a fine horse, but the other had been

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682 unsuccessful. The latter, who was walking on the return journey, asked the other to lend him his horse. The owner of the horse didn't see why he should do so and the two got in a heated argument. When one reached for his knife, the other beat him to the draw and killed him. When the survivor was asked on his arrival home as to the whereabouts of his partner, he said: "I don't know where he is. I haven't seen him since we separated at such-and-such a place." Not long after that, however, when the group was traveling, they came upon the body of the murdered man. Only then did the survivor confess, but nothing was done to the murderer under the circumstances.

682 688 *Case No. 2.* Although the details leading up to this case are missing, it is known that a few years prior to 1860 a certain man stabbed and killed his son-in-law, shot his horses and burned his possessions, leaving only the lodge standing. The murdered man's brother shot and killed the murderer in retaliation. Unfortunately, however, this was not the end of the matter. The one who had avenged his brother's death was participating in a Kitfox Dance and was in the ceremonial lodge in the center of the camp circle just about to receive the pipe. At that moment, one of the company which was policing the Dance—a relative of the original murderer—shot and killed him on the spot. There was of course great confusion, and one of the chief performers in the Dance protested this act of violence which, regardless of other considerations, should never have been perpetrated during a Sacred Dance. The policing company, however, presented a united front and rode around the Kitfox lodge in the center of the circle singing: "No one say anything to us or we will shoot right now." Nevertheless the wife of the man who had just been killed ran out of her lodge, when she heard them singing, and said: "Oh I am not afraid of them. I am going to give them a tongue-lashing!" People warned her not to do so, but she called out insults at them and added, among other things: "Look at their dirty buttocks!" Several members of the company said: "Let's go over there and beat her to death," to which she boldly replied: "If you want to do it, it is all right." The chief performer in the Dance, who had protested before, spoke up again: "Now you want to do something wrong again. Why kill an old woman who is through with her life any-

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way? I warned you not to do anything. If you kill her we will not proceed with this Dance. It is a serious thing to interfere with a Sacred Dance, but if you persist we will all scatter." This appeal was effective and the Kitfox Dance was carried out without further mishap.

Case No. 3. On one occasion in about 1862, some men were drinking and two of them got in a tussle. The one who got the worse of the fight went to his brother and said: "Kill your wife. Her son [by another marriage] almost killed me. If you kill your wife, you can have one of mine." The husband took his brother at his word and went to his lodge and killed his wife, put her corpse on the fire, and heaped coals on top of it. The wife's two brothers, hearing of their sister's unjustified murder, went that night to where the men were still drinking. When the man who had originally instigated the murder saw the brothers coming closer and closer, he called out: "I don't want anyone to come any nearer or I might shoot him by mistake." But the brothers were not deterred and, approaching closer, shot and killed the man who had called out. Thus the one who had encouraged his brother in murder paid for the crime with his own life. Nevertheless his relatives mourned for him as they would have had he died under different circumstances, but they made no attempt to retaliate for his loss.

Case No. 4. The following incident occurred about 1865. Practically the whole tribe was camped together and there was a lot of drinking going on. A woman, crying, came in the lodge of her sister's husband. When they asked her the cause of her tears she told them that a certain man had beaten up her son and herself. Her sister's husband immediately took up his gun and went out into the night looking for that man. When he met up with him, without asking any questions except to be sure he had the right one, he shot him dead. When he returned to his lodge, his wife urged him to flee, but he refused to do so, saying: "I don't think his people will take up for him since he was in the wrong." Nevertheless several riders dashed by, shooting at the lodge but not doing any damage. The women were frightened and started running toward the chief's lodge. There was snow on the ground and they had a hard time locating it, but at last they got there and

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796 circuit, when the tempo and vigor of the dance had appreciably increased, he finally speared the dog flesh, leaving his fork in the pot while he stood there resting for a few moments.

When the fork owner had somewhat recovered his breath, he took the dog flesh from the pot and put it in a big dish nearby. He then went to an outstanding warrior and, taking him by the hand, invited him to come up to the dish. In the same way he selected two other prominent warriors. One of these then asked some member of the society to select a fourth warrior, but this one must have been wounded at war. When he had been named, the fork owner invited him and led him to join the other three who were sitting in a semicircle facing the fire.

The owner of the crow-belt removed the feather-bustle from the fork man and tied it around the spoon owner. Then another song was started and the spoon owner went to the space between the fire and entrance to begin his circuit of the fire. He exhibited his graceful body with his best steps as he made three motions with the spoon over the heads of the seated warriors. On the fourth time he touched the meat with the spoon. After a short pause and when he was breathing more normally after his strenuous dancing, he touched the meat with the spoon and, having raised the spoon first upward and then downward, laid it on the tongue of each of the first three warriors. The warrior who had asked for the selection of the wounded warrior took the spoon and laid it on the tongue of that one.

796 688 Had any one of the four warriors indulged a short time previously in sexual intercourse, he was supposed not to allow the spoon to touch his tongue and refused by turning aside his head, thereby making a public confession. It would have done him no good to have refused to come to the center of the dancing-place when first invited because his hanging back would have caused even more attention and he would have been subjected to vulgar jeers. It was said by informants that occasionally one or another warrior would ignore the rule but that this was a dangerous thing to do. As a case in point it was related that one man, known to my informants, tried to get by with it and allowed the

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spoon to touch his tongue regardless of consequences. Some hours later in the excitement accompanying the end of the dance, this man's horse was jumping around and broke loose, was chased by a dog and ran against a log projecting from the corner of a corral. The horse was killed. The owner then admitted that this bad luck had befallen him because he had falsely allowed himself to be honored at the dance.

Following upon the performance with the spoon, the dog meat was next distributed to the four warriors, the wounded warrior receiving the head. When the meat was eaten the skull was put down to the west of the fire. The four warriors remained seated while the other members danced for some time. So soon, however, as the singers switched to the appropriate music, the spoon owner dashed to the dog skull and pointed the skull in four directions, and the four warriors danced around, everybody else rising to dance at his place, yelling and calling out, while this song with chorus was sung once. All were then seated except the warriors who pranced around the fire four times. After this each of the four warriors in turn picked up the dog skull, pointed it in the direction in which he had accomplished the particular war deed he was to recount, and related his story. If one of them had been forced to refuse the spoon, the owner of the spoon would have to point the dog skull for him while the warrior talked and gestured. The warrior who had been wounded spoke last, and when he finished he tossed the dog skull outside of the dancing-place.

The owner of the whistle had a particular dance. When the accompaniment started, it was stated, "for some reason he did not dance alone. It seemed that all the members were glad and danced with him and kind of helped him. The song was repeated three more times. At the end of each 'stanza' the owner of the whistle would dance at the edge of the circle, apart from and very much faster than the other dancers." It was his privilege, too, to "punish" the dancers. At a signal from the owner of the whistle, the singers would switch to the "punishing songs" of which there were said to have been ten in all. No one could drop out of the dancing while these were being sung. Each of the ten songs could

rections around the circle. It was understood that if any woman had not risen to dance by the time those holding whips reached her, she would be lashed. These four women had the additional duty of helping serve when it was time for the general feast.

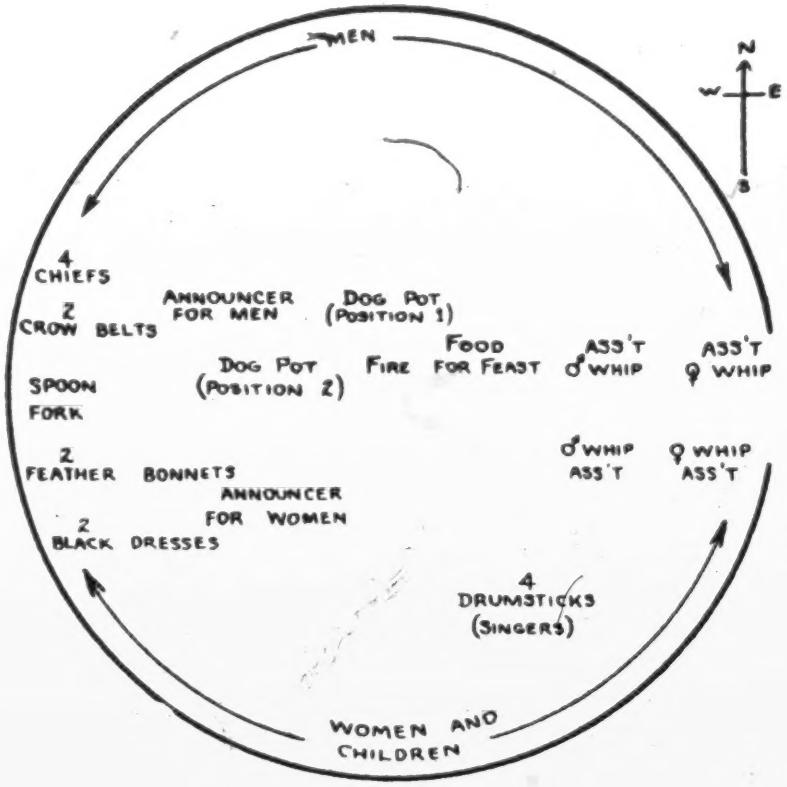

Fig. 1. Diagram of Dance Ground.

Considered as next in rank to the four "chiefs" were the four male singers, who, as in former times, owned the special drumsticks "decorated and official-looking, like emblems." They were expected to know faultlessly all of the many songs connected with the Grass dance as first adopted. If they should, for instance,

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796 178 [688] sing a song out of the prescribed order, the "chiefs" would stop them at once, announce the mistake and what fine was to be demanded of the singers. Were the four women singers performing at that time, they too were penalized.

[534] The owners of the drumsticks cooperated with the owner of the drum whose special duty it was to care for this instrument and to have it in repair and ready for use at any time it was needed.

The concepts pertaining to the crow-belts, spoon, fork and whistle remained unchanged. The owners of these regalia treated them with the same respect as of old. Additional ceremonial equipment had been introduced in the form of four feathered war-bonnets, two of which were owned by men and two by women. There was a special little ceremony connected with the two bonnets owned by women. Early in the dance two outstanding warriors were selected to take these bonnets from their owners, dance four times around the rack where they were hung in front of their owners, and then hand them to the first two women sitting at the left of the door. When it was time to dance these women would don them and wear them throughout that dance, then pass them on to the next two, and so on, until everyone had had a chance to wear them.

796 178 624 Finally, there were two announcers, one who called out what he was directed to say by any of the men, and the other who publicized any statement to be made on behalf of the women.

All of these individuals were considered as office-holders in the Grass dance and, as formerly, each was free to transfer the office [622] to anyone he considered suitable to succeed himself. There was no regular term of office even for the "chiefs" and the transfer was described as purely voluntary. Apparently, however, there was a certain amount of consultation among the officers, when one of them decided to transfer his office, in order to agree on a well-qualified successor. Among other things it was necessary to consider the financial status of the individual, especially for those to take over the higher offices. Not only did the recipient heap property upon the donor, but according to the older pattern too, [431] the relatives of the recipient would give away horses and so on